sharing intelligence, providing Central Para-Miliary Forces on specific request, and by providing funds for modernisation and upgradation of the policing and infrastructure. The Rapid Action Force has been created exclusively to deal with communal violence.

The Government is committed to safeguarding the interests of minorities and bringing to book the perpetrators of violence against them.

Declaration of assets by Ministers

5567. SHRI S. AGNIRAJ: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have announced that each Minister will declare his assets after assuming office;

(b) if so, how many Ministers have declared their assets and the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken to get these information from all the Ministers in the Cabinet?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) The Code of Conduct for Ministers provides for furnishing of a declaration by each Minister regarding his assets and liabilities. The contents of the Code have been brought to the notice of the members of the present Council of Ministers.

The statements of assets and liabilities have been received from 17 Ministers. Others have been reminded to expedite the same.

Exploration of minerals in Maharashtra

5568. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Geological Survey of India and Indian Bureau of Mines and MECL have carried out surveys and exploration of minerals in Maharashtra during the past three years;

(b) if so, the details of the work carried out by these organisations in Maharashtra;

(c) the details of action taken for exploration of mineral resources of Maharashtra during the past three years, investment made and proposed during the current year and next five years both in public and private sectors; and

(d) the details of estimated private and public sector investment proposed during the next five years in Mines and Minerals sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINES AND MINERALS (DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI) and Mineral Exploration Corporation Limited (MECL) have been carrying out exploration for minerals in Maharashtra.

GSI is engaged in exploration of gold, diamond, manganese, chromite, rare earth elements and dimension stones.

Gold : The mineral is investigated in Pular (W), Kolari, Bhaonri and Ranmangli area, Parsori (W), Parsori (E) Bhaonri, Kalla Pahar area and Kitar-Marupar block in Nagpur and Bhandara districts. In Kitari-Marupar block 1.19 mt of ore containing 1.33 g/t gold, 1.33% Copper, and 3.65 g/t silver have been estimated. In Parsori (W) Gold ore reserves of 1.0 mt are estimated, with tenor of 1.7 g/t. In Kitari-Kheri blocks estimated ore reserves of gold are 57000 tonnes with an average gold content varying from 0.92 to 2.58 g/t. The ore bodies are small in size and grade of ore is low. In other areas the result are not very encouraging.

Manganese: Manganese ore investigation was taken up in Belda and Belda-Junewani area, and Parsoda block Nagpur district, and Bhandara-Dalera block, Bhandara district. In Parsoda block a reserves of 0.178 mt. of Mn ore is estimated.

Chromite: Chromite is reported from Pauni and Taka areas of Bhandara and Nagpur districts. The occurences of manganese are not found encouraging.

Bauxite: Rajapur area in Ratnagiri district displays bauxite horizons. The other areas exposing bauxite laterite are Palla, Rameshwar, Katradevi, Chinched mandewadi and Kumbawada—Nanar.

Dimension stones: A number of potential areas of dimension stones are located in Bhandara, Gadchirroli, Nanded districts of Maharashtra.

Coal: GSI has interected a coal horizen at 120.15 meter depth in Bhatalli area during the course of exploration for coal in Wadha valley coal exploration in west Sanoner and Karja area is being attempted below the Deccan Traps.

During the last three years *i.e.* between 97-98 and 99-2000 MECL continued exploration for coal in Nagpur, Chandrapur and Yewatamal districts. Reserves of coal established in different areas are given below:

Reserves in Million Tonnes

District	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Chandrapur	—	202.81	7.55
Nagpur	54.63	73.93	150.52
Yewatmal	—	—	29.00
TOTAL:	54.63	276.74	187.07

(c) and (d) The expenditure incurred by GSI during the past three years and proposed in the current year is given below:—

Year	Investigation	Drilling
1997-98	Rs. 8.84 lakhs	Rs. 130.40 lakhs
1998-99	Rs.11.68 lakhs	Rs.111.70 lakhs
1999-2000	Rs.13.72 lakhs	Rs.156.10 lakhs
2000.2001	Rs.15.09 lakhs	Rs.171.09 lakhs

Tentative proposed expenditure in respect of GSI for the next five years on prospecting and survey is Rs. 75.45 lakhs and on exploratory drilling is Rs. 855.55.45 lakhs in Maharashtra.

The expenditure incurred by MECL during the last three years (97-98, 98-99 and 99-2000) on exploration in Maharashtra is Rs. 2.61 crores, Rs. 5.558 crores and Rs. 2.64 crores, respectively. The proposed expenditure for 2000-20001 and 2001-2002 for the tentative work allocation of 15000 meters only is Rs. 210 crores and Rs. 1.12 crores, respectively.

The Government of India, Department of Mines have accorded permission of the grant of prospecting licence (PL) for aerial prospecting in the districts of Nagpur, Bhandara and Gadchiroli in Maharashtra for gold, copper, lead, zinc, molybednum, nickel and platinum in favour of M/s Geomysore Services (India) Pvt. Ltd. over an area of 3490.00 sq.kms. for a period of 3 years. As per the information furnished by the State Government of Maharashtra the company had informed the State Government to incur an expenditure of Rs. 13.5 crores over a period of 5 years i.e. Rs. 2.7 crores per year.

Nickel Plant in Orissa

5569. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA: Will the Ministerof MINES AND MINERALS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have examined in the past, the proposal to set up a Nickel plant in Orissa; and

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof?